Wimbledon 2012 to start dry and bright

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Met Office forecasts indicate that the tournament will start dry with bright or sunny spells and only a very small chance of a shower interupting play on Monday. However Tuesday looks cloudier, with rather humid conditions and a greater risk of showery rain potentially interupting play.

Spectators and visitors can keep up with the latest weather at the championships by visiting our dedicated Wimbledon page throughout the fortnight.

Forecasting at Wimbledon

Like last year, Met Office forecasters will be stationed on site for the duration of the tournament. Our forecasters will combine the latest scientific knowledge and technology from the Met Office's headquarters in Exeter with on the ground weather reading and assessment. This means that if it's drizzling on the ground, the on site forecaster can then access information from the Met Office's arsenal of radars, forecasts and mapping systems to find out which direction it's moving in the wider area and know whether it will affect play, and for how long.

Even though the new retractable roof means that play on centre court can continue when it's raining, the weather will still impact on play on the other courts and Met Office forecasts are still used to determine when to close the roof and, perhaps even more importantly, when it is safe to open it again.

Tim Hewson, one of the on-site Met Office forecasters for last year's tournament, said: "We can't stop the rain from falling, but we can help the referee organise the tournament around the weather, so that spectators get to watch as much tennis as possible, and so that players don't risk injury by playing on slippery courts."

In the video below, Chris Tubbs, who will be on site forecasting this year, talks through the process of forecasting the weather for the championships.

Forecasting for Wimbledon (PDF, 90 kB)

Wimbledon weather facts

- The warmest Wimbledon Championship on record was 1976, where temperatures averaged at 25.4 C.
- In 1997, 118.3 mm of rain fell during the championships, making it the wettest Wimbledon on record.
- Perhaps rather unfairly, Wimbledon has always been associated with bad weather and particularly with rain. But actually play has only been totally rained off 32 times in 125 years.
- Most years, some rain does fall during the championships, however there have been seven years where rain did not interrupt play at all - 1931, 1976, 1977, 1993 and 1995, 2009 and 2010.

The Met Office will be providing a range of forecasts for the public during Wimbledon including:

- Our special **Wimbledon Events page** that enables visitors to view the forecast up to five days ahead.
- Latest weather updates on our **Twitter** and **Facebook** pages throughout the championships.
- Video forecasts on the **Met Office YouTube channel**

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Wimbledon Forecast Interview

Chris Tubbs – Deputy Chief Forecaster

What are the challenges for forecasting at Wimbledon?
Well Wimbledon does present quite a few challenges. In general they worry about cloud amounts, sunshine and temperature, but perhaps the most important challenge is getting the rainfall right because it's not just about heavy rain but drizzle can cause problems in a tennis match because the players can get injured and generally we have to forecast rain to quite a degree of accuracy because as soon as it starts to rain we have to get the covers on to keep the courts dry and stop the players getting injured. So I think that's the biggest challenge for forecasting at Wimbledon.

What technology do you use?
We'll be taking along our laptops and these laptops can display what is called visual weather, displays of which are shown behind me here. We also use satellite data and look at radar data and we can look at model data and that's very useful for what we do. We also keep in touch with the forecasters here at Exeter because they can look at other sources of data and we have a conference daily with the forecasters in Exeter to make sure we're telling the same forecast and giving some good information to Wimbledon so they get the best forecasts during the Championships.

Why it is useful having a forecaster on site?
I think it's useful to have a forecaster on site because first of all to see the weather actually at Wimbledon, to experience the rain, drizzle, whatever, but it's also important to be the right hand man of the referee himself. I spoke to Andrew Jarrett last year and he said that it's very useful to come to your office, have a look at the weather together, make a decision and then go off and he can have a look at scheduling, he can look at all the other things he has to do at Wimbledon. So his right hand man is why it's important to be on site at Wimbledon.

Why is it important for Wimbledon?
Wimbledon is perceived as probably rightly as one of the biggest tennis tournaments in the world, so they want to see that they're getting the best forecast and the best information so that they can schedule the tennis tournament correctly. So I think it's very important to be on site and to talk to the referee quite a lot, he is very keen to bring committee members from Wimbledon tennis committee in to my office to discuss the forecast and what we can provide for them. So I think it's very important to get the expertise of the Met Office in the forecasting environment at Wimbledon.